Interview with Richard M. Fairbanks III

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR RICHARD M. FAIRBANKS, III

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Q: I wonder if you could start with a discussion of how you became interested in foreign affairs.

FAIRBANKS: I was interested in it as a student. I was born in Indianapolis and went to school in Florida and in Indiana, when I was very young, and then I went to the Westminster School in Connecticut. I went to Yale on a navy scholarship, majoring in history , with special emphasize on European history. At that time, I was a student of events taking place abroad and their effects on the United States. I always wanted to be involved in foreign policy. In view of my scholarship, I went into the Navy for four years, which gave me the opportunity to travel extensively, which happens to people assigned to destroyers, as I was.

So I saw a fair part of Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Ironically, I had opportunities to see areas in which I would later be involved diplomatically. I was on the first American warship to go through the Suez Canal after the Yemen civil war. We went to Egypt and all of the Mediterranean countries, to Saudi Arabia, to Yemen, to Aden, to Djibouti, to Kenya and then all over Europe from Norway down through Greece. It was extensive. Unfortunately, I did not get to the Far East at all.

Q: Did you get a feeling for foreign affairs from this experience?

FAIRBANKS: I found out how little I knew, and developed an interest for foreign peoples and our country's relations with them. I had intended to leave the Navy and go to graduate school. I was trying to decide whether to go to the Fletcher School or to law school. I decided on the latter because that gave me more flexibility, but what I really always wanted to do was to move to Washington to serve in and out of the government as a Washington lawyer.

I graduated from law school and came to Washington and after a couple of years of private practice, joined the government in 1971 in the Nixon Administration. I became special assistant to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency when it was first established. We had to invent EPA at that time. After working at EPA for six months, I was the “expert” and transferred to the White House staff. I was the first non-campaign person there, arriving in the summer of 1971.

Later I became the Associate Director for Natural Resources, Energy and Environment of the White House Domestic Council. Obviously, most of my work related to domestic policy —Clean Air Act, Water Act, the first energy message—but some of my activities involved me in international relations. Interestingly, the first experience in this area came from Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Trust territories in the Pacific, which were American territories, but were dealt with by the Department of State. I happened to be given the White House responsibility for the Territories. I was also responsible for international energy policy. Those were the days when we were just beginning to come to grips with energy issues, and, in the course of these events, I became acquainted with Henry Kissinger and became friendly with some of the people on his staff, some of whom I met again when I worked in the State Department—Bud McFarlane, for example. Therefore, I dealt with certain international issues, but I was perceived essentially as a domestic policy person.

When I left the Government in 1974, to set up a law firm in Washington with Bill Ruckelshaus, who had been my boss in EPA, I stayed involved in energy, environmental and natural resources issues and politics. I was in charge of those issues for the Republican National Committee. When Reagan became the Republican nominee, I went to work for him on these subjects. During the transition, I was responsible for work in those areas. They offered me various jobs, but I didn't want to go back into government at that stage of my career. I thought that this was the time to be a Republican lawyer with a Republican administration. My wife would go into government, and I turned down all those wonderful jobs.

But much to my surprise, Al Haig contacted me. I had known him when he was on the NSC staff and as White House Chief of Staff, where I worked closely with him. He wanted me to join him in the State Department. Secretly, I was ecstatic because I always wanted to go into foreign policy, but I didn't have any credentials. When I asked Haig what he wished me to do in the Department, he proposed the job of Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations. I told him that I didn't know much about Congress. He replied by saying that I didn't know much about foreign policy either, so that the two could be combined. That's the way I started in the Department of State.

Q: Let's go back to the White House period. Was there any interest at all in the environmental problem on a global basis?

FAIRBANKS: Yes, there was something called CCMS (the Committee for Challenges of Modern Society) which was a subcommittee of NATO, interestingly enough. Russ Train, later to be the Administrator of EPA, was then the head of the Council for Environmental Quality, which was a White House office. Russ was very interested in international affairs, and EPA itself had an Associate Administrator for International Affairs. I dealt with them a lot. Russ Train and I would go to Europe together to CCMS meetings. We would stay with Don Rumsfeld who was then our Ambassador to NATO. We related internationally with Europe and never did anything with Asian countries. The basic nexus was through CCMS.

We worried about acid rain in Europe, we talked about Lake Baikal and its pollution problems.

There was a realization that there was a fragility to the natural environment and that we were affecting in ways we really didn't understand. We felt we should understand it better. We undertook international analyses and set up data bases. Certainly, when we were drafting the Clean Air Act standards for the United States, we were looking at international pollution. This was in the early 1970's when we were establishing EPA and the Council for Environmental Quality, passed the Clean Air Act, set the air quality standards, came to grips with pesticides, banned DDT. It was a very active period for environmental laws and regulations.

Q: Why had there had been this discovery all of a sudden that things were going wrong?

FAIRBANKS: That really happened before I got there. I was lucky enough to be on the ground floor bureaucratically, but the impetus for the pro-environmental actions came from, according to a lot of people, Rachael Carson's book Silent Spring which was very important. There were a number of other outside-the-government thinkers and scientists —other people who had brought the issue forward—who helped to crystallize thinking at the beginning of the Nixon Administration. Nixon had some people who were involved in these issues and had been very interested over a period of years, like Russ Train, for example, who had been the number two man at the Department of the Interior and who subsequently became the Director of the Council for Environmental Quality when that was created. Bill Ruckelshaus, the first Administrator of EPA, was interested in the environment because he was an outdoorsman—liked to hunt and fish and go outside. He started to notice the rubber tires at the edges of lakes and the froth from the detergents in the streams.

It is interesting that, if you look at the Bush Administration now as it stresses international environmental issues, many of its leaders are the same people from whom I learned about

the environment at the beginning of the Nixon Administration. For example, the head of EPA is now Bill Reilly, who was a college classmate of mine, and was on the staff of the Council for Environmental Quality at the same time I was at the White House. The Associate Administrator of EPA for International Environmental Policy, who has just been named, is Tim Atkinson, who was the General Counsel for the Council, when I was in the White House. So many of the same group of people are once again in positions of leadership.

Q: Let's turn to the State Department. When did you come in and what were your actual responsibilities?

FAIRBANKS: In December of 1980, even before the President Reagan was sworn in, I had the conversation with General Haig. He was setting up his team before Inauguration Day. Out of 26 Presidential appointments, he had basically decided on 24 by January 20. He was able to hit the ground running. We were a lot quicker in having people named than the Bush Administration has been, although not necessarily that much faster in having them confirmed because we had some confirmation problems. So I agreed to serve as Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations. I started looking into the State Department and learning a little bit about it. I talked to the people who were there during the Carter Administration, talking to people who had the job I was going into, (this is “H”) in previous administrations, Republicans and Democrats—Dave Abshire and people like that. I chose my own deputies and staff and got organized so that on January 20, we could walk into the offices and take over.

The first person confirmed was of course the Secretary, General Haig. The second and third people were Bud McFarlane and myself who had confirmation hearings within the first week of the administration. Then we went to work on the other confirmations.

Q: Was there something else in your job besides Congressional Relations?

FAIRBANKS: I was somewhat of an avuncular advisor to the Secretary because I had known him for a long time and we had a good relationship. When they first started to set up staff meetings, for example, they asked what they thought were the key people to attend. I was not on the list. I went to General Haig and pointed out that the Congressional side of things was important, that I couldn't relate to them and that he couldn't relate to them unless I knew what was going on. I was his eyes and ears. I was thereafter included in all the staff meetings.

Q: Please give me an idea of secretary Haig's operating style? How he looked upon foreign affairs and the Department and the Foreign Service?

FAIRBANKS: Haig was a guy who came into the office with a very broad over-view having worked at the NSC for many years, having been very successful as a military officer both in combat and more recently as the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe. He had dealt extensively with European politicians as well as with military people. He had very good relations and rapport with senior level people in Europe. He had very strong ideas about foreign policy in a macro sense. In his confirmation hearings, he never had a note. He spun out his philosophy of where things should be going in every region of the world. He was someone who came in with an agenda and priorities and an overview of what he thought were the most important problems that had to be dealt with.

Having been a professional military officer, Haig had great respect for the successful professionals of the Foreign Service. He had a lot of them in senior positions in his office, in the Executive Secretariat and as many of the key Under Secretary and Assistant Secretary positions. He relied on both political appointees he had brought in with him and career Foreign Service officers to form a team. It was a well integrated, well functioning team, at least from my perspective. The morale also was quite good.

Q: How were you perceived as a member of a new team and of new administration, not only in terms of a new President but as another political party?

FAIRBANKS: I was received first with fear and trepidation. Many people, I think, in the Foreign Service had been reading newspaper views on how Ronald Reagan was a crazy right-wing activist who didn't understand foreign policy, and I was the first Reaganaut to be seen. People sort of looked at you to see whether you had horns and whether you were going to be trusting in them or whether you were there to implement a right wing agenda, with which they didn't agree or of which they wouldn't be part. That lasted about twenty-four hours. There was no long reaction. It was definitely however an eye opener at first. I was very fortunate that the people I inherited in H were a very motivated crowd. I brought in only a very few political appointees as did most of the other new appointees to the Department. The legislative management officers who were the basic working level troops and some of the non-Foreign Service officer career staff were very darn good. I knew literally three Foreign Service officers before I went to State. One of them happened to be working in H unbeknownst to me when I arrived. He had been the best man at my brother's wedding. So I felt very comfortable moving in quickly.

Q: The change over in administrations apparently went very smoothly in places like the European and Near East Bureaus. But there was blood all over the corridors in Latin America, because there was both a change in policy and in attitude. Those who had been in the Carter Administration were felt to suffer. There were a lot of hard feelings. Did you get any reflection of that?

FAIRBANKS: Not really. As a matter of fact, the first head of ARA in the Reagan Administration was of course a career Foreign Service officer. He was one of the other two I knew before I joined the Department—Tom Enders. I didn't hear any particular feed-back. I was so darn busy—H is a busy place particularly in the first year of an administration. In addition to all of the confirmations for Presidential appointee level positions in the Department, there were all the Ambassadors who were changing at that time. We had approximately 130 confirmations going through the Senate. Then there was foreign aid authorization and appropriation in both Houses; then we ad hoc battles like funding for

Salvador and the AWAC (Airborne Warning and Control System) sale to Saudi Arabia —probably the most controversial Congressional vote of the first year of the Reagan Administration.

Q: What did you and your staff do in the confirmation process?

FAIRBANKS: For each of them, we would schedule a session with the nominee to tell him or her how Congress worked, how they might handle themselves, what they could look for both in the personal visits and in hearings, what the Congressional concerns were in the area for they were being nominated. For each of the nominees either I, if they were of high level visibility or high ranking, or my staff for the rest, would take them on personal courtesy calls to the individual Senators' offices prior to the hearings and then would accompany them to the confirmation hearings as well. In many cases, we would lobby the Senators to make sure they would be well treated and that they would be confirmed. Some of them were controversial.

Q: Did you have any particular problems?

FAIRBANKS: We had a number of problems at that time. Several of our nominees were held up for some months by individual Senators with particular problems. Certainly, the one that got most attention in the press was Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina. He put holds on a number of our nominees—Larry Eagleburger being one example that comes to mind. There were others—Chet Crocker for the AF Bureau. We dealt with those. The Secretary himself had to talk to Senator Helms. I had, of course, done so as had several people from the White House staff.

We had one real advantage in handling Congressional relations, at least at the start of the Reagan Administration. That was that Richard Allen was the National Security Advisor and he was an old friend. I had told him before taking the job in State that I would take it only if the White House would agree not have a separate function for congressional relations for foreign policy. Neither he or the NSC staff or the White House congressional relations

staff under Max Friendensdorf, who was also a friend, would have their own people. So if anyone on the Hill had a question on foreign policy, it would be channeled into one place. Before that and later in the Reagan Administration it had been otherwise, making it much more difficult to deal with. The exclusive approach puts a lot of stress on the person in the State Department because they are five hundred sixty-five members who think they know something about foreign policy, and who care about particular issues, all channeling into one place, but at least it gives the Administration the ability to speak with one voice. It is also good for both coordination and for making sure that there is integration within the State Department. We tried inside the Department to assure that the different regional bureaus and the different Under Secretaries didn't themselves go running off to the Hill and having their own conversations which we didn't know about.

Q: How did you try to control this?

FAIRBANKS: The only effective way is with the backing of the Secretary. Secretary Haig put out the word that this was the way it was going to be done. Anytime I found anybody straying off the reservation, I would crack the whip and it worked. They jumped back in line because they knew that this was the way that the Secretary of State wanted the show run. I had his backing and it worked for that reason.

Q: I imagine that on policy matters, you were the equivalent of the traffic cop seeing to it that the experts on a problem in an area got to the right people.

FAIRBANKS: That is certainly the way I started. After I had developed a little confidence in these matters, I would testify myself on a number of issues. When the bills were on the floor, unexpected amendments would be introduced on the spur of the moment, and in view of the time urgency, I would have to make the calls on whether we supported them or not. You work your way into substance as time goes along.

Q: We are talking about the beginning of the Reagan Administration. It was almost a unique time in the post-war era with the Senate majority being of the same party as the

administration. Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina, a Republican, was a major factor in foreign affairs. What at that time, did you feel was the Senator's motivation? What was he trying to achieve?

FAIRBANKS: He had a couple of motivations. One was that he felt very strongly about the kind of policies that he had hoped and expected the Reagan Administration would follow. He had been a very early supporter of Ronald Reagan to be President of the United States; he felt that he was comfortable with those policies and understood them. He wanted to make sure that, from his point of view, the kind of people who would follow the policies he expected went into the right jobs. He felt that he had a role to play to make sure that the Reagan team was the right team. Also, he has a very strong feeling about the role of the Senate. He takes “advise and consent” seriously and would try to extract agreements and promises from nominees that they would follow a particular course of action. He is a very active, involved, articulate defender of his views. He played a very strong role. The Senate was run by Republicans; the Foreign Relations Committee had a Republican majority; the chairman was Charles Percy of Illinois. Senator Percy and Senator Helms, although of the same political party, didn't see eye-to-eye on every issue and so there were divisions within the Republican camp in the Senate—divisions between the left and right wings. The State Department is the focal point for much of that because there were some very strongly held views in the Senate on foreign policy which were fought out in many cases on personnel grounds.

Q: How did you deal with that kind of a problem?

FAIRBANKS: We were representatives of the Executive Branch. The President had his policies and his personnel choices. These were Ronald Reagan nominees that we trying to get confirmed. Therefore we would take the position that we wanted to hear what the Senator had to say; we respected the Senate as a co-equal branch of the government which had a responsibility under the Constitution for confirmation, but on the other hand, we didn't back down or kowtow because certainly Al Haig and Ronald Reagan were

people who knew their own minds. If they wanted something done in their Administration in a particular way and wanted particular people to do it, they expected to get those people confirmed. It was a process of listening and sticking to our objectives. We didn't drop any nominees. We didn't change our minds about any. We had only one nominee who didn't get confirmed out of the entire list, and that was Ernest Lefever, the initial nominee for Assistant Secretary for Human Rights. Actually, he withdrew, so we never really lost one. There were some close ones, however. Bill Clark who was the initial Deputy Secretary of State, had a fairly close vote in the Foreign Relations Committee on partisan lines. But finally, everybody did get confirmed.

Q: Can we now discuss the AWACs? This was a major politico-military concern which was extremely sensitive to the most powerful political lobby in Washington—the Israeli lobby. How did you deal with it?

FAIRBANKS: We were handicapped to some extent because the decision had been made within the Administration that the primary emphasis in Congressional relations for the first six months would be on domestic policies—tax reform, budget, and on the macro issues that the President and his staff felt should come first. So, during that emphasis period, the AWAC sale, which had originally been negotiated by the Carter Administration —so everybody knew it was coming—was neglected. The opposition to it was working during this six months period and we were not doing anything at all. By the time we were authorized to come out of the closet on that issue, it was early summer of 1981. At that time, a letter had been circulated in the Senate which already had, I think, 54 signatures on it. The letter opposed the sale of these advanced, battle management systems to the Saudis, arguing that they would be a threat to Israel and therefore destabilizing. So we had 54 Senators lined up against us publicly before we even got started lobbying. That made it a very exciting battle.

We set up an integrated team consisting of people from the White House staff, from Defense and from State. We split the entire Senate into three groups and we had three

groups on our side, each with representatives from the White House, Defense and State. I was in charge of the total effort. We had meetings each day in the Situation Room in the White House. We had the three teams, as I mentioned, which originally I had intended to name the A, B and C teams. But I figured that everybody wanted to be on the A team. Then we thought we would call them the first, second and third teams. That was discarded for the same reason. We ended up calling them the Red, White and Blue teams.Members of each group talked to each Senator individually, so that all 100 Senators were briefed by one of those teams. We made our presentations on why the Administration had decided to proceed, what the arguments were, what the responses were to the problems perceived by the other side. After all of that, there were more Senators in the “uncommitted” column. There were still some 50 plus nominally against us. Then we started to focus on others whom we thought were good opportunities. We tried to find out what the Senators' problems really were. Our analysis showed that the Senators wanted to make sure that certain requirements would be met—the safety of the equipment from the hands of terrorists, the prevention of diversion from the Saudis, whom many on the Hill personally trusted, unlike other elements in the Middle East, the opportunity to stop the program in case something went awry. We tried to find a couple of people who had credibility in a bipartisan way and who, if we met the security conditions in writing, would support us. It turned out that Senators Nunn and Warner who were the ranking Democrat and the second ranking Republican respectively on the Armed Services Committee were willing to introduce what was called the “Nunn-Warner Resolution”, in which they posed a series of questions to the President. We responded in writing and on the basis of that, they said they would support the sale. Then there were a number of Senators who had talked specifically to Senators Warner and Nunn. We would brief each of them. All of this started to turn the momentum around, since, as I have always found, the best lobbyists in the House or Senate are the members themselves. When the resolution to disapprove the sale was first started we had 18 Senators in favor of the sale, but then we began to pick up additional votes. We had a series of meetings between the President and Senators, both en masse—I remember a large group of Senators one

day in the East Wing— and individual meetings. These were attended by the Secretary and other high-ranking officials of the administration. We talked to them individually about their concerns and about our responses. Slowly, but surely, we got to a 50-50 position. Senator Cranston of California was the leader of the opposition. Shortly before the vote, he announced that he still had 52 firm votes against the sale. It was very exciting up to the last moment. I remember standing next to Tom Dyne, the director of AIPAC (American-Israeli Political Action Committee) which was the focal point of the opposition in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee when the Committee finally voted. We ended up winning 9-8 in the Committee and Mr. Dyne was very surprised. He thought it was going to go the other way. That evening or the following evening, was the vote in the full Senate. I had told General Haig that we would win 52-48, despite Senator Cranston's vote count. And that was the way the final vote came out. It was very exciting.

Q: Looking back on it, do you feel that this was part of a power game on the part of the friends of Israel to make sure that the Reagan Administration would jump to their behest? Did this represent real concerns, or was it an inflated issue?

FAIRBANKS: I think there were real concerns. There were many who opposed the sale because they felt that any addition of arms to that volatile region was dangerous and counter-productive. They felt that we should not be party to putting higher performance weapon systems into the region. There were some who thought that no matter how mild the Saudis were and what their own needs for self-defense were, that the mass of the Arab world, being in a technical state of war with Israel, meant that anything that went into any Arab country was de-facto, at least potentially, usable against Israel. That was a real concern. I never doubted the sincerity of those on the other side. They had very deeply held views and they continue to be deeply held.

Q: When in 1982 were you given a new position?

FAIRBANKS: In December 1981, Congress went into recess for the Christmas holidays. At that time, we had gotten foreign aid authorization and appropriations through both Houses of Congress for the first time in four years. We got a Republican majority to vote for foreign aid. We hadn't lost a vote all year long. So I walked into the Secretary of State's office and I told him that I had given him “blood, sweat and tears “ for a year and that I would be returning to the practice of law. I wished him luck for the future. He said “Fine. Find a good replacement”. So I found a good replacement, Powell Moore, who had been in charge of Senate relations on the White House staff. He was known to Haig. I went off with a House Congressional delegation to Brussels for discussions with the Europeans. Before leaving, General Haig said: “I am going to make you an offer you can't refuse. I am going to make you the negotiator for the Law of the Sea”. I told him that was a job I could refuse. He responded : “I thought you would. That is not really what I meant. I would like you to be the special negotiator for the Middle East peace process”. He was right; I could not refuse that opportunity.

I went off with the Congressional delegation and the word began to leak out while I was in Brussels that Powell Moore would be appointed as Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations and that I was being fired. That got my attention. I went to the leader of the Congressional delegation and told him that I thought I'd better get home to save my reputation. He wished me good luck, and I flew back to the US Then the word leaked out as to what I was going to do. I said that I didn't pretend to have a considerable amount of background on the issues. Secretary Haig said that it was a lawyer's job, that my predecessors in the Carter Administration had been lawyers—Bob Strauss and Sol Linowitz. He said that I was a lawyer, that he had confidence in me and that he wanted me to do the job. I said “Fine”.

I left H in December 1981 and the announcement of my new duties was made in January 1982. Before the public announcement was made, I joined General Haig and Nick Veliotes, who was the Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs at

that time and a couple of others on a trip to the Middle East. We went to Egypt, Israel and Jordan. We talked to the leaders about the peace process, where it stood—autonomy under Camp David, what was needed, negotiations, etc. Basically, the purpose of that trip was both for the Secretary to take another look at the views of the leaders of the region and to introduce me to them as the negotiator. We arrived at the airport in Israel, just having come from Egypt and Haig held a press conference on the tarmac in Tel Aviv. The first question from an Israeli journalist was: “Mr. Secretary, we understand you have a new negotiator for the peace process and his name is Fairchild”. Haig confirmed that we had a new negotiator, but his name was Fairbanks with an emphasis on the “Fair”. We got back on the plane and Veliotes turned to the Secretary and said: “Mr. Secretary, you missed a great chance. You should have said that his name is Fairchild with the emphasis on the “Child”. I was clearly known as someone who was very young and inexperienced in this job. I inherited the same staff that had been working on the peace process under the Carter Administration. So we didn't have to reinvent the wheel.

Q: Where did matters stand in January 1982?

FAIRBANKS: There hadn't been much progress on the Camp David peace process during 1981. Obviously, as the United States went into its presidential election, matters went into stasis on the Middle East negotiations while people waited to see what was going to happen. After the elections, there was going to be a change, and people felt that they had to wait for the new administration to get up to speed. The professional staff who had been working on the peace process stayed intact. They had a couple of meetings beginning in mid-fall 1981, resuscitating the conversations at the staff level on autonomy and about ideas to bridge differences among the parties, etc. But Middle East peace was just beginning to appear on our agenda. Haig had been out to the Middle East once or twice and talked about strategic consensus, pulling people together to look at the Soviet threat. But this was the first time we put the emphasis back on the peace process.

We did very clearly put the emphasis on it through the series of meetings he had in January. I immediately went out again after the Secretary's trip and started a negotiating train with the Foreign Ministers of the countries and of course I would also talk to the Chiefs of State as well in the negotiating sessions. We basically ran into a problem in the winter and early spring of 1982, which was that the meetings had been held alternatively in Israel, Egypt and the United States—the three parties to the Camp David agreements. When it came to the Israeli's turn, they decided that the discussions would take place in Jerusalem. They had previously been held in Herzliyya. The Egyptians refused to go to Jerusalem because that city was part of the problem and symbolically the wrong place to go. The Israelis were insistent. Therefore we ran into a venue problem for the meeting. So, I had to go from one side to the other to gather ideas and put them together. Then we tried to bridge the venue problem, and I came up with some ideas on that. We went forward during the course of the spring of 1982 and made some progress in crystallizing the differences between the Egyptian and Israeli positions.

Q: Could you give us a little background for those who might not be familiar with the Camp David accords? What had been accomplished by the Carter Administration and where was the process to go?

FAIRBANKS: Of course, the Camp David meeting itself produced the accords which had basically two parts. One, was a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel which was basically being fulfilled by the time the Reagan Administration came in. That is, there was disengagement in the Sinai, there was an international peace keeping force in the Sinai separating the two parties and Israel had agreed to return all of Sinai to Egypt. That was one-half of the Camp David accords. The other half, the forward looking part dealing with the occupied territories—the West Bank and Gaza—and providing a formula for the resolution of that part of the Middle East process and Israeli disengagement from their Arab neighbors and hopefully a long-lasting and formal peace regime between Israel and its Arab neighbors. We were working on the second half, although the first half was still

being implemented. The final withdrawal from the Sinai occurred about the spring of 1982 when the Israelis pulled all the way back out of the Sinai and the Egyptians took it over as their jurisdiction.

The track I was really concerned with was the continuing peace process for the West Bank and Gaza. That was to be done in stages under the Camp David accords. The first stage of the process was to provide autonomy for the residents of the areas. There was to be elections in the territories for Palestinians to join an Egyptian delegation and hopefully also a Jordanian delegation, so that there would be a Jordanian-Palestinian-Egyptian-US-Israeli conference. So instead of the three parties then in the Camp David peace process, we were trying to draw in two additional parties—the Palestinian residents and the Jordanians. Our attempt was to move the autonomy process forward and that is what we picked up. This was while the Sinai disengagement was going on.

Q: How did this relate to the continuing pressure from Israel to have the United States put its embassy in Jerusalem?

FAIRBANKS: From the Israeli point of view, they said that every country gets to choose its capital. They pointed out that the US had its embassy in Tel Aviv while they claimed Jerusalem as its capital. They were not asking the Egyptians to recognize Jerusalem as the capital; the Egyptians had their embassy in Tel Aviv as well. All they were asking was for the Egyptians and the Americans to come to Jerusalem for a conversation and negotiations with a country with was at peace and with which they had diplomatic relations. They wanted to know what was wrong with that.

Q: That would appear to extend the agenda that you were working on.

FAIRBANKS: Jerusalem is probably the most difficult of all the difficult issues, which is why it is always put off to the end in all peace process conversations. It is a very emotional issue, both on the Israeli and the Arab sides. Certainly, there was no attempt to use this to diffuse the process, but once the question of the Jerusalem venue had been raised, it

would have been a great loss of face for the Israeli body politic to back down. These things are always difficult. We did have ways of bridging that by bringing the foreign ministers to the United States. We were building up to convene a mini Camp David at the foreign minister level by having the Israeli and Egyptian foreign ministers join the Secretary of State on the Eastern shore of Maryland. We would bring them all together and present to them the American bridging ideas on the points of disagreement, get an autonomy agreement, have the elections and move forward. That was our game plan, which we were ready to put into effect in June 1982. My negotiating team in May 1982 was out in the area; they had just left Egypt and arrived in Jerusalem for conversations with the Israelis in preparation for the June meeting when the Israelis invaded Lebanon. So we pulled the negotiating team out of Jerusalem and told them to come home because we didn't want to have it appear that we were supporting the invasion. They came home and that really was the end of the autonomy process. The Egyptians withdrew their Ambassador and the whole peace process was put in stasis. At about the same time, in June 1982, Haig was relieved as Secretary of State by Reagan; George Shultz came in as Secretary of State in June 1982 and was told by the President to get a handle on the Middle East situation, have a thorough review and come up with some new policies. As many of the people who had been appointed by Haig, I submitted my resignation. Shultz decided he didn't want to accept and asked me to stay on. We spent the summer of 1982 relooking and revisiting the peace process, starting at ground zero. He spent over 50% of his time in the first three months as Secretary dealing with Middle East issues. As a result of that review and a series of conversations and meetings at Camp David, came a Reagan speech on the Middle East on September 1, 1982. We launched our program with that speech and then Phil Habib and I were sent out by the President and the Secretary to go around the region and talk about the plan.

We spent the entire fall of 1982 in the region to see Prime Minister Begin, President Mubarak, King Hussein, King Fahd, President Assad and other leaders in the region. At the same time, the Israeli advance into Lebanon came to a stop and we were negotiating

the withdrawal of the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) from Beirut. So we really had two negotiations going on; Phil was doing that. He was also accompanying me on the peace process. When people asked what I did and what Habib did, I used to respond by saying that Habib was in charge of war and I was in charge of peace.

The peace process culminated in Washington with a meeting with King Hussein, who stayed for about a week. We had very long meetings with him and his staff. We were trying to draw in the missing partners—the Jordanians and the Palestinians— into the peace process. King Hussein returned to Jordan and had meetings with Arafat and tried to get what we then called the “green light” from the PLO to embark on the negotiations. It looked like he had obtained the “green light” from Arafat at one stage, but then Arafat met with the PLO Executive Committee in about February 1983 and instead of giving a “green light” or a “Yellow light”, it gave a “red light”. That ended that game.

Once again, at about the end of March, I went to the Secretary of State and said that I had done my best, that it had been a long fifteen months and that I was resigning. He said that I couldn't do that because he was about to go out to the Middle East, and he needed me as his lawyer because we had to complete a peace treaty. There was to be direct negotiations between the Lebanese and the Israelis to try to make an arrangement for Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. I agreed, of course, to go with him on that trip. I became involved in drafting a number of the documents for what turned into the May 15, 1983 peace agreement between Israel and Lebanon. During that period, Habib, Maury Draper, who worked for Habib, Nick Veliotes and Shultz would go to Lebanon each day to negotiate with Gemayel and the Lebanese. I would stay in Israel and would have occasional conversations with the head of the peace process team, Yosef Burg, the Minister of Interior, but I spent most of my time writing documents and assisting in the Lebanon affair. We got the withdrawal/peace agreement and on the way back from the Middle East trip, I told Shultz that I could now resign in good conscience. He said “No; Habib had become persona-non-grata with the Syrians and would not talk to Assad anymore because Assad didn't like some of the things that happened in the negotiations

to ending the fighting in Lebanon. He didn't want to deal with Habib anymore, he had said. So I got drawn into the Lebanon process and went there with Habib and Draper. They introduced me to all the Lebanese parties and so I then picked up that side of things. The Habib-Draper mission, as it was known, was replaced by the McFarlane-Fairbanks mission. Bud McFarlane, then the Deputy National Security Advisor, joined me, and we went out to Beirut to take over responsibility for the Lebanese process. We would travel from Israel to Syria and occasionally to Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, trying to put together Israeli withdrawal and the stabilization of the Lebanese situation. We thought we would go out for a week or two and then return to consider the problems. We never did get back because matters became dicier and dicier, and closer and closer. Finally, it blew up again into war when the Israelis withdrew from the Shuf which is the area south of Beirut. In late August 1983, the shelling started and civil war broke out. The Syrians came in, the Druze came out, the Christians were fighting and it was the usual Lebanon morass. McFarlane and I would shuttled around on two different planes. We would go off in two different directions every day, trying to put the pieces together with the Saudis, the Syrians and the Israelis. Finally, we got a cease fire in Lebanon in about late September, 1983 and we came back and got a war-powers resolution through Congress, authorizing our continued presence in the international peace-keeping force in Lebanon, together with the British, the Italians and the French. It appeared that we might get the situation stabilized. McFarlane returned to Washington to become National Security Advisor, and I was left in the Middle East by myself again. Shortly after that, we had the bombing of the Marines at the airport in Beirut in October—242 killed. After that, we continued to try to get the Lebanese parties to talk to each other.

Finally, we succeeded in that. Again we had a venue problem because the Christians (the Maronites and the Greek Orthodox) and the Sunnis and the Shiites and the Druze couldn't even agree where to meet. They wouldn't meet in the Presidential Palace—wouldn't meet here—wouldn't meet there. Finally, we got them together, with the help of the Saudis, in Geneva in November, 1983. I went to Geneva and met with all the parties there—the

Syrians, the Saudis and all the Lebanese parties. I had accompanied Shultz in meetings with our European allies and briefed them on our game plan. We wanted the Europeans to support us. We finally got an agreement among the Lebanese parties in November, 1983 where upon I did really get myself extricated from the Middle East and turned it over to Don Rumsfeld, who then became the Middle East negotiator.

Q: Who were the Israelis and Egyptians you were dealing with? How would you characterize them?

FAIRBANKS: For the Israeli and Egyptians, nothing was more important than the peace process. We had therefore top level attention. On the Israeli side it was the Prime Minister, Menachem Begin, his nominal chief negotiator, Yosef Burg, who was the head of the National Religious Party and Minister of Interior, General Sharon, who was the Minister of Defense, and Moshe Arens, who had just left being the Ambassador to the United States and at that time was a cabinet advisor and later Minister of Defense. There were also other members of the Israeli cabinet—they had a eight-nine man group of their cabinet which was their negotiating team. To support their team, the Israelis had a staff of lawyers and bright fellows from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including David Kimche and Hanon Bar-On from the Foreign Ministry.

On the Egyptian side, certainly every time I went to Cairo I would meet with President Hosni Mubarak, the Foreign Minister, a retired General, and their negotiating team.

Q: You didn't feel that either side was just keeping up a pretense? You felt that both were committed?

FAIRBANKS: That was absolutely true for the top level people in both places. When I first met with Begin as head of the US delegation in early February 1982, I was accompanied by Sam Lewis, our Ambassador to Israel, and the eight people on my team. Begin had eight or nine members of his cabinet on his team. At the end of the formal meeting, Sam Lewis and I were invited into Begin's private office, where we continued the discussions.

About half way through that meeting, Begin turned to Lewis and said :"Sam, when you bring a Senator or Congressman to see me, I always ask if he is a freshman. With Fairbanks, I don't have to ask". At that time, we had "call signs" for the security people throughout the Middle East. Habib was called "Killer" or something like that. Mine of course became "Freshman" for the rest of my time in area.

Q: Did you or members of your delegation have any feelings about the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the middle of a serious peace process? There had been some talk about Secretary Haig either giving the go-ahead to Israel or at least implying that we would be benevolent neutrals.

FAIRBANKS: I was in the meeting where that story originated. Sharon had come to the US approximately ten days before the invasion and had meetings with Haig. I was in those meetings. Haig maintains to this day that he didn't give any private assurance to Sharon. I certainly never heard it. He had a couple of very brief private meetings with Sharon, but I don't believe that he intentionally gave anything like a green light or anything else. I think Sharon, for his own purposes, may have believed that Haig had done so or wanted to believe that he did. Haig rebutted this allegation in his book, but it continues to be bandied about. I do not believe that Haig either did or intended to give any assurance.

Q: What was our reaction when this happened? Did you see everything going down the tube?

FAIRBANKS: Sure. We were all prepared within a month to bring people to this country to sit down to resolve the issues once and for all and then move on to the next stage of autonomy. There are those of a cynical bent who believe that the Israelis knew that their actions would bring the process to a halt and used the excuse of the attack on their Ambassador in London to kick off the invasion, even though there had not been any rockets from Lebanon into Israel for the prior five or six months. History will be the judge.

Q: Were you privy to the resignation of Secretary Haig?

FAIRBANKS: No, it happened in Europe. The President and Haig were over there for the summit of the industrialized nations in—I think in France that year—, but I was not on that trip.

Q: As far as the Middle East was concerned, did you find that there was a difference between the attitudes of Haig and Shultz?

FAIRBANKS: Both thought it was in the US national interest to make progress on the peace process. Both had the goal of achieving a formal peace treaty between Israel and its Arab neighbors. As far as tactics were concerned, the September 1, 1982 peace initiative bore a striking resemblance to our previous policies. There was no break in policy. In the articulation of that policy, we said some things publicly that we had always believed privately. That was really the only difference.

Q: Then you didn't feel any real change in the leadership in what you were trying to accomplish?

FAIRBANKS: No. The personal styles of Haig and Shultz were certainly different, but as far as the substance is concerned, there was no radical difference.

Q: What about the decision to keep our Marines in Lebanon? First, they were put there to assist with the PLO departure; then they were brought back in as a small military force with no particular mission.

FAIRBANKS: That is again an allegation that was made. I was not in the negotiations that put them there. That was when Habib and Draper were in charge of that part of our efforts. What they were doing was trying to stabilize the situation in Lebanon. The President of Lebanon said that he needed a period of time to bring the various Lebanese factions together to get the situation stabilized. He felt that couldn't be done without international

assistance. It wasn't just American assistance: there was also a French military force, an Italian force, and a British force. All the flags were flying. They were all running around. Then we had the UNIFIL in the South and the United States was part of that. So it wasn't a unilateral move by the United States. It was something the international community, particularly our Europeans allies, felt was worthwhile and would make a contribution.

Q: There were obviously very strict prohibitions on dealing with the PLO at this time. Yet it is a factor and today we are having conversations with them. Did you have any indirect way to communicate with it? Did you feel that at some point we had to bite the bullet and had to talk to the PLO?

FAIRBANKS: We maintained the position from the mid-1970's, when Kissinger first laid it down, that we wouldn't deal with PLO and certainly not recognize it until it had met certain minimal conditions. We maintained that policy all during this period and throughout the Reagan Administration until the PLO met the requirements. There wasn't ever a feeling of having to deal with them. The feeling was that they had to change their position in order to deal with us. Basically, they had to recognize the existence of Israel and renounce terrorism.

Q: You left Middle East matters at the end of 1983. Did you move immediately to Ambassador-at-Large dealing with the Pacific basin?

FAIRBANKS: Just to stay in practice, I again told the Secretary that I had the firm intention of resigning. Shultz suggested that I take a vacation, which I did for a couple of weeks. Then I returned, and he said, “We have a great new job for you.” I asked what it was. He said :”We want to take a fresh look at Asia—where we are and where we are going.” He went on to explain his view that we have an important set of relationships with these countries; they are becoming increasingly important to us and to the world. We have every good bilateral relationships with them, but we have no way of relating to them as a region, and they have no way of relating to each other multilaterally. It was very useful in the

post-war period on the European side to have the growth of the multilateral institutions of which we are part, whose agenda we are familiar with and through which we can have on-going conversations. Since all of our problems are not bilateral, don't we want to go in that same direction on the Asian side? He suggested that I go out to Asia to explore and to see where we want to be with this group of countries in twenty or thirty years and what we might do now to go in that direction. He told me to report back in six months to a year and tell him what I thought we should do.

That is the kind of assignment you never get in the government. You always have to report next Tuesday. This was, therefore, a unique opportunity and a challenging one. I also had a couple of other responsibilities; on was to be in charge of international energy policy, because I had dealt with energy policy at the White House when George Shultz was the economic advisor, and he, therefore, considered me to be an “energy” person. I also had the portfolio for the Iran-Iraq war. This set of issues seemed to me sufficiently worth-while to continue to work hard, travel extensively, not see my family a lot—all the things you do in the State Department. So I accepted.

I embarked on those three sets of issues. I remembered I called Phil Habib right after I decided to do this. Phil had been Assistant Secretary for East Asia and Ambassador to Korea and was an old Asian hand, not a Middle East expert by his Foreign Service experience. I told him about my task, and in typical Habibian style he said :” This is a damned outrage. You know less about Asia than anyone in the State Department”. I agreed with him, but noted that I knew more about Asia at that moment than I knew about the Middle East two years earlier.

Basically, I got on airplanes and traveled around talking to people in Asia. I would sit down with Presidents and Prime Ministers and people like that and would tell them that the President and the Secretary of State had sent me out to do something for which Americans are justly famed; namely to be subtle and to listen. They would laugh hysterically because they knew that Americans are never subtle and never listen. But we

attempted to, and it was easy for me because I really didn't know much about the region. I did a lot of reading; I did a lot of talking. I tried to assess what had been holding them back from regional multi-lateral development and what if anything had been growing in that direction and what I could do to assist it. I continue to work on that now as a private citizen.

On the Iran-Iraq side, we pursued “Operation Staunch”—which aimed at preventing arms shipments from the free world to Iran—because we decided that the danger in that war was that one side or the other might win it. The best that could be achieved from the American point of view was for the war to stop and for neither side to win. If Iran won, with its revolutionary regime and Khomeini's band of radical Islams, it would be very dangerous for our interests in the Gulf. Similarly, Iraq, standing astride the region, would also be dangerous. Therefore we decided that ending the war in stasis was the best result. Iraq, we believed, could not militarily defeat Iran; it was a much smaller country, and basically, at that time, was fighting defensively. Iran was the threat because it sought to push its revolution in the Gulf. The Iraqis were looking for every way possible to sue for peace and the Iranians weren't. We thought we should wind the war down, and, since Iran had basically American weapons, we wanted to make sure that they weren't getting any spare parts and weren't getting any new high-tech weapons systems to replace the American arms. We, therefore, beefed-up “Operation Staunch” by launching diplomatic initiatives in all the countries that we were friendly with to encourage them not to deliver arms. We also talked to the Soviets to control the East block countries in order to cut their deliveries down.

Q: How responsive were the Soviets?

FAIRBANKS: Not very. Nominally they would be, but practically, no.

Q: Were you involved in the “Iran-Contra Affair”?

FAIRBANKS: No, I certainly wasn't.

Q: Later, there was some transfer of military equipment in the hopes of freeing the hostagesfrom Lebanon. That was not true when you were in the Department?

FAIRBANKS: Absolutely not. We were following the opposite policy. We were trying to staunch the flow of arms, not only ours, but those of our allies as well. We talked to our European allies, our South American allies, our Asian allies.

Q: Where did you run across problems on our side?

FAIRBANKS: There were some of our European allies that were making a lot of money selling arms—the Italians for a while, but they stopped. The Swiss, the Portuguese.

Q: Did you have to shown them photographs as evidence?

FAIRBANKS: Sometimes we were more subtle than that. Sometimes we were more confrontational, depending on the situation. It was quite effective.

Q: How did you find the Foreign Service support and attitude during your Middle East tour? It has often been said that the Foreign Service is anti-Israeli or pro-Arab.

FAIRBANKS: Virtually everybody, with one exception, who worked for me during the Middle East period was a career Foreign Service officer. I had one fellow with me who had worked with me at my old law firm; otherwise they were all career Foreign Service officers. I found them almost without exception to be dedicated to one thing and that was the interest of the United States. As I said with regard to the two Secretaries of State, I never found any disagreement with the basic interest of the United States: to have a just and lasting peace in the region. It would have been very counter-productive to American interests to have the Arab-Israeli controversy proceed; it was very harmful to us in the Arab world; it was very dangerous to the Israelis and everybody was dedicated to trying to find peace. Tactically, obviously there were disagreements among people, whether they loved Israel or not. I did not find an anti-Israel bias. I think the reason that perception

comes forward is that those who deal with that region in the State Department deal with twenty-two Arab countries and one Israel. If you speak Hebrew, there is only one place where that is spoken. If you speak Arabic, there are an awful lot of countries where you can use that skill. Therefore your assignments tend to be much more in the Arab world. You have a lot of people in the NEA Bureau, experts in that region, whose career pattern is locked into lots of assignments to Arab countries and very few to Israel. I think the fear is that they get “clientitis”—the same way people say that wherever you are stationed you begin to see the world from the perspective of your host country. But I didn't meet any anti-Semitism among career Foreign Service officers. I didn't find a mind-set that could be fairly characterized as taking the Arab view point. I think there is a mischaracterization, and I have said so in a number of speeches to the American Jewish community and in Israel.

Q: Concerning your Pacific Basin work, what conclusions did you reach?

FAIRBANKS: I concluded that it was in the interest of those countries and in the interest of the United States to have multilateral identification of the set of countries take place and to have at least a forum where that group of countries including the United States could come together and discuss our mutual interests—where we were going, what were the points of friction. This is not to say that I supported a regional decision-making entity to which we or anybody else would give up a piece of our sovereignty—that is not in the cards, at least in the foreseeable mid-term anyway. But I thought that at least a formal multilateral sharing of concerns would be, at least in the near and mid-term, useful if it were a purely economic entity. The interest of the countries were too diverse to have it based on security concerns. What had been holding back what would seem to be a natural development in that region had been two things: one, leadership and the other, membership.

On the leadership point, the large economies of the region, basically the United States and Japan, were feared—the Japanese for economic and historical reasons, the United States for geo-strategic and envy reasons. The Muslim countries of the region, Indonesia and Malaysia, didn't like our Middle East policies. Many of the other countries wanted to

maintain a non-aligned policy and didn't want to be seen as allies of the United States, but wanted us economically involved as a counter-weight to the Japanese. A direct formal leadership forcing role to accept a multilateral forum either by the United States or Japan had proved counter-productive in the past and I thought would still be so in the near term. On the membership side, you had the problems of ASIAN not being willing to accept South Korea because they thought that the North Koreans were important to solving the Cambodian and other problems like that. You had the China-Taiwan situation in which the Republic of China has very few diplomatic relationships left, although they are a much more dynamic economy in the near term than even the billion people in the People's Republic. Then there is the problem of the Soviets, who are also a Pacific power. And what do you do about Latin America, which has an enormous coast on the Pacific, but which is not really part of the Pacific basin. So both leadership and membership were holding things back. There were some private sector-led initiatives including governments which were starting to build the tendrils. So I concluded that we should support as much as we could the growing leadership in that direction which was being provided by the private sector organizations; that we should keep ASIAN and the smaller countries involved; that we should multilateralism grow slowly by consensus in an evolutionary way. That is what I think the policy has been and continues to be. For instance, there is an entity called the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC) which now has member committees from the United States, Canada, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, each of the ASIAN countries and both China and Taiwan as full members. These are tripartite committees in each country consisting of government people, businessmen and academics. That is providing the kind of basis for the idea of a multilateral structure, which is still in existence today. It is private-sector led. I used to give speeches all the time when I was in government about how the private sector had to take the lead; when I left the government they challenged me and told me that it was now my turn. I am now the President of the US National Committee for the PECC.

Q: Did you see in the medium to long term a withdrawal of our military presence from the Philippines, for example?

FAIRBANKS: I think what happens in the Philippines is related in part to what is happening between us and the Soviets. If the Soviet rhetoric, if the speeches by Gorbachev, if his new policies are to be translated into reality, that will obviate the need for as much American military presence in the region as we have today. Certainly, we don't like to spend all the money that it takes to keep our troops in Korea and in Japan and in the Philippines. If we feel we don't have to do it in order to maintain a geo-strategic presence, that would be delightful. But that is not the circumstance today. Therefore, I think we will have to try to work with the Philippines, but we may get to a situation in which they won't take us anymore, although their ASIAN friends under the table—they don't like to say things publicly—have been quietly stressing to the Philippines their interest and that of everyone else in the region to keep us in the area. So these things are still up in the air.

There are some interesting straws in the wind. The Vietnamese seemed to be over-stretched in Cambodia and maybe we can get a solution there. We have had at least beginning conversations between North and South Korea, although they don't seem to be getting anywhere at this stage. The Chinese and the Soviets are starting to deal more openly with South Korea. There are some interesting conversations taking place across the Taiwan Straits. The whole region is very much in flux. A lot of trends are very good from our point of view because what seems to be winning and what seems to be effective to a group of people who are very pragmatic, are market-based economies and more participatory political systems. Those are winds of change for the future that favor us.

Q: There are two questions left. One, looking at your work with the State Department, what gave you the greatest satisfaction?

FAIRBANKS: There were a number of high points. Certainly, in my first year,

—the foreign aid authorization and appropriations,

—a couple of the confirmations which were contentious but got through

— the AWACs bill,were all something that I took some pride in.

—In the Middle East, personally, the fact that by the end of my tour I had served longer as the American envoy to the area than anyone else. Both the Arabs and the Israelis speak to me. I tried to be even handed and I still have some credibility on both sides. I take some personal pride in that.

—The September 1, 1982 peace initiative in which I was involved, stood the test of time. It was the best statement on the Middle East made during the last generation by an American President.

—The cease fires in Lebanon—they contributed to the peace process, although they didn't last as long and didn't resolve the situation as one might have hoped. They were at the time the best we could do on a tactical basis.

—Of course, the beginnings of Pacific multi-lateral cooperation which I worked on is being echoed a lot around the Pacific now by, for example, Prime Minister Hawk and former Prime Minister Nakasone, Senators Cranston and Bradley in this country and former Secretary Shultz. A lot of people are talking about it who weren't talking about it a few years ago. I think that is because we started the tendrils growing in the right direction. I think within the next four years we will see the evolution of a forum of Pacific nations. That will be a historic evolution.

Q: The last question. If a young person came to you to seek your advice concerning a career in the Foreign Service. What would you advise?

FAIRBANKS: It is difficult; it is challenging and it couldn't be more important. I hope that we could continue to get the kind of caliber of people that we have attracted to the Foreign Service. If we don't, it is going to be to our detriment because the countries that we deal with have their best and brightest going into foreign policy—the Japanese, the smaller countries. The people you deal with are professional members of the foreign services of other countries and are the cream of the crop of their societies. We can't afford to having anything but our best as well. Despite the difficulties, I think the feeling of accomplishment and being involved in major issues, as they are, would continue to provide the challenge to attract the kind of people that we need.

FAIRBANKS: This is an addendum. With regard to Lebanon, we were discussing the prospects of the future of that country. The most revealing thing to me in Lebanon was that the mind-set of those people was just crazy. They were killing each other and it was chaos. They have had civil war there now for a decade and despite that, when we got the peace process going there—the disengagement process in the fall of 1983—we finally got all these people to Geneva. We had twelve Lebanese parties sitting around the table with the representatives of Syria and Saudi Arabia. The twelve Lebanese parties represented the major confessional elements of the polyglot make-up of Lebanon. It was very interesting because of the twelve Lebanese parties present in 1983 in Geneva, every single one of them had been personally present when the country was set-up in 1942 or 1943, whenever it was, by the French or their father had, except for Nabih Berri. Every single one of them, despite all this bloodshed and chaos and civil war, was the exact same establishment. What country of the world would have the exact same establishment forty years later? Underneath all the chaos, there is more stability than is visible. The problem is that with that stability, this guy looks across the table and sees someone who killed his son or daughter. There is always this baggage that is being carried with them. But there is still an underlying stability. There has to be hope, but this latest go-around between the Christians, being supplied apparently by the Iraqis, and the Syrians—once again they are in the place where the other frustrations of the Middle East get played out. It is not just

Arab-Israeli, by any means. It is intra-Arab, intra-communal and Iraq against Syria, all played out in that one little stretch of land.

Q: You mentioned that when you were negotiating, you were being shot at.

FAIRBANKS: Lebanon was the place. In the rest of the Middle East I always had security agents and guards. There were various terrorist threats. But the terrorist threats were not just threats in Lebanon. Certainly, every day I was there I wore a flak jacket and helmet. I always had an armored car with outriders front and rear and armed people sitting next to me when we moved. The airport was closed most of the time I was in Beirut, so we would fly in and out by helicopter. The helicopter would got shot at every time I moved in and out. I learned very quickly that one does not wear a flak jacket in a helicopter; on sits on one's flak jacket. Personally, every day from late August of 1983 to early October of the same year, our Ambassador's residence, where I was living, was under artillery fire. Every window in the building was broken, we had no bomb-shelter and the 105 shells would land in the swimming pool adjacent to the house. They set a fire behind the kitchen. I don't think I ever got more than two hours of sleep at night. No one loves the negotiator.

Q: Ambassador Fairbanks, thank you very much for giving us your time for these very interesting insights.

End of interview